

Goodchild

N. F. S.

FIRE WOMEN'S MAGAZINE ..

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Christmas Message

from

Mrs. Cuthbert, Senior Woman Staff Officer (Home Office)

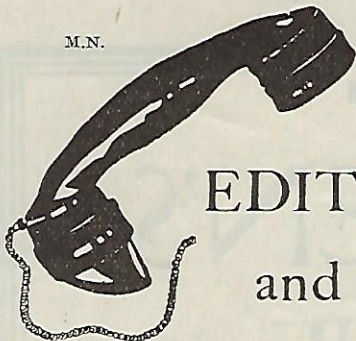
The National Fire Service has been in existence for only sixteen months, but in that time the firewomen have fully justified the confidence placed in them. They have been given new and responsible duties and have risen finely to the opportunities to show their capabilities.

To the many part-time women now coming into the Service, I would like to say a special word: "You form an important link in the chain of our organisation. How strong that chain becomes depends largely upon your efforts. I am sure the whole-timers will welcome you and do their best to make your pathway smooth."

It may be that some find this period, of comparative freedom from enemy attack, dull, and even difficult. Such times call for the expression of even higher qualities of leadership and comradeship than did the more strenuous days of heavy raiding. Many can rise to great heights in the hour of crisis, but it is the giving of our best all the time, every day, which proves our true worth.

Let us then "keep on keeping on," until peace and goodwill descend upon the world once more.

M.N.



EDITORIAL and NEWS

A Happy Christmas to all Readers of this Magazine. And may they all look forward confidently to a New Year whose span of months will bring us within sight of a victorious and lasting Peace.

The Editor regrets that she cannot provide the "really Christmassy number" for which one contributor asked. But in celebration of the Season, coupled with the fact that the Magazine has now completed three years of publication, this issue has been enlarged to 16 pages (and even then some items have had to be omitted!). She sends her thanks to all Representatives, old and new, for their work, and thinks that everyone will be interested to know that the circulation, which dropped to under 1,000 in the bad "Blitz" days, is now over 6,000. She is glad to welcome Areas 14 and 27 since the last issue, and a Regional Representative for Region IV. She hopes all Areas, and Scotland, will be represented shortly!

Congratulations to two of our contributors: Fwmn. Galvin, whose poem "Sam Small—Fireman" (September—October issue), is bringing contributions in the form of Recitation Fees to Region X's branch of the Benevolent Fund; and to Fwmn. Addison, Region III, whose poem "N.F.S. Girl" (July—August issue), was utilised by D/O Underdown, of Slough, in his display window for N.F.S. recruiting.

Thanks to Staff Officer Richter for his letter (page 14)—a generous tribute.

And now for our News:—

The National Fire Service played a prominent part in **Civil Defence Day** (Sunday, 15th November). Its members took an important place in services and parades all over the country, the most imposing of these probably being that held in the midst of the ruined streets of the City of London. Here, at St. Paul's Cathedral, the King and Queen reviewed men and women of the Civil Defence Services gathered together from all the cities and towns of England and Wales which had suffered heavy raids.

The women's side of the N.F.S. was well represented—a mark of the increasing recognition of their important part in the war effort. Under the leadership of Senior Area Officer Mrs. Perris (Region V, Area 35), fifty women, drawn from all over the Regions as well as London, marched proudly past, conscious, perhaps, that they had the honour of representing thousands of their comrades. Many were wearing decorations for gallantry and devotion to duty and not one but felt rewarded anew by the Queen's understanding smile.

And now here is the personal story of one of the girls who came to London for the great event:—

"Saturday, November 14th, is for me a day I shall

never forget, as it began my visit to London for the Civil Defence Parade.

Leaving home at 07.30 hrs. I travelled to Manchester where, feeling rather excited but lonely, I was met by personnel of No. 27 Fire Force. At 09.30 hrs. we left Manchester by express on our long journey to London. Owing to mist we could not view the scenery as I had hoped, but by 14.45 hrs. I found myself amidst the hustle and bustle of the great city and this being my first visit I was at once impressed by the tall buildings and the noise of much traffic.

After being warmly welcomed by personnel of No. V Region we were conveyed to the Central Fire Station, Albert Embankment, where we had lunch. We were then taken by N.F.S. 'buses to a Reinforcement Base which was to be our billet for the weekend. After a short rest we again boarded the 'buses which conveyed us to Lyon's Corner House where we enjoyed an excellent dinner. Leaving the café at 19.00 hrs. we went on to a show at the Odeon Theatre at which we were guests of the London N.F.S. During the interval Sir Edward Evans, Admiral of the Fleet, gave an interesting speech in connection with the Civil Defence Parade on the Sunday. After returning to the Reinforcement Base we were given an excellent supper, then retired to bed after our exciting day.

Sunday, November 15th, began with reveille at 07.30 hrs. and preparations for the parade due after lunch. At 12.30 hrs. we went to the assembly point. We were then arranged in files of sixes behind the Police Force and were followed by other members of the Civil Defence. Amidst the cheers of the crowds and the waving of flags we marched past the King and Queen who were standing at the top of the steps of St. Paul's Cathedral, the King taking the salute. The procession then proceeded into the great and historic Cathedral where a short but memorable service was conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury. When we left St. Paul's we marched to Trafalgar Square where, after a brief inspection by a Fire Force Commander, we were dismissed. Not having much time left we made our way back to collect our belongings which we had left in the 'buses and after hurried goodbyes we travelled by underground to Euston Station and caught the train back to Manchester, tired but excited by our unique experience."

Fwmn. I. Dickenson, Region X, Area 28, "D" Div.

Region I

The efforts of our representative (who, by the way, has now been promoted to the rank of Group Officer—congratulations!) have been well rewarded, and as the closing date for contributions approaches she is found to be knee-deep in items of news.

First, here is a tasty tit-bit from the **Entertainments' Dept., Regional Headquarters**:—The entertainment of personnel in No. 1 Region is going ahead on well-organised lines and Leading Firewoman Hitchcox of Regional Headquarters is an energetic Business Manager. The Regional stage show—with the appropriate title of "Fireworks"—has been presented to large audiences in Darlington, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Stockton-on-Tees and Scarborough, resulting in well over £200 being handed to the No. 1 Region Benevolent Fund, and visits are being planned to Middlesbrough, Gateshead, Bishop Auckland and other centres. Firewoman Eunice Taylor (2.C.1.Z) and Part-Time Firewoman Joyce Hardman comprise the feminine element in a quick-moving, efficient production. Regular end-of-course concerts and dances

are now a feature at the No. 1 Regional Training School and some excellent talent has been found amongst the students. The *pièce de résistance* of the evening is "the firewomen's chorus," usually to the tune of "Bless 'em All," which gives the hardworked students a fine opportunity of saying (or rather singing) a few words about the instructors!

Regional Staff Officer Tennant, who with Regional Musical Director Flush is the guiding hand in Regional entertainment, has received many applications for auditions from firewomen throughout the Region, and if any of you in No. 1 Region are amongst these, you can be assured that you will "get your chance" before very long.

And now for No. 1 Fire Force—Part-Time Leading Firewoman Stafford, of Sub-Division 3, "C" Division, sends us this report:—

On Saturday, October 3rd, 1942, a "Field Day" was held in the grounds of the Whitley Bay High School by mixed members of the N.F.S., Sub-Division 3, "C" Division. Although it was late in the year it was voted a great success.

The N.F.S. Regional Brass Band accompanied the personnel on their march to the Sports Field, where the various competitions were decided. There was ample scope for all classes—egg and spoon races, high jumps, flat and bicycle races, relay and mixed three-legged races, etc., etc., and also a special event for the veterans. All the events were most keenly contested and praise must be given to a hard-working Committee for the excellent arrangements.

It is to be noted that "F" Division have held two Sports Dances during the past two months and proceeds, which are for their Welfare Fund, are said to be increasing rapidly.

Next, we have the following account of the activities in No. 2 Fire Force:—

The firewomen in this Area are at the moment mostly interested in three things:—1. *Promotion*.—There is a big drive afoot to find the hidden leaders who are worthy of stripes. Over the whole of the 2,000 odd square miles the call has sounded and uniformed figures are stepping boldly forward to face Selection Boards.

2. *The Standard Hours of Duty System*.—One by one Sub-Divisional strong points are falling to this mighty invader. Firewomen are living together and making of the meagre equipment provided "Homes from Homes." Everyone is helping—chairs are brought from home, curtain material is "collected," rugs are sometimes got from gas instructors, typical North-country mats are made from clippings; but perhaps the greatest help of all comes from the No. 2 Fire Force Welfare Fund, which caters amongst other things for the health, happiness and, therefore, efficiency of firewomen.

3. *Netball*.—Representatives from every Sub-Division are attending a Leaders' Recreative Physical Training Class taken by the Local Organiser of the Central Council of Recreative Physical Training and are going back to their Sub-Divisions and forming Netball Teams. Matches are being played and it is whispered that a Netball League is to be formed and that all this running and jumping and catching and shooting is encouraged by Commander Mardon and Mrs. Mardon, who have offered to provide a Cup for the League.

Since the last issue this Region has been honoured by visits from Mrs. Cuthbert, Senior Woman Staff Officer, Home Office, and Mrs. Stoneham, Supervisor of Women's Studies, The National Fire Service College, Brighton.

M. S. R.

Region III

The Senior Woman Staff Officer, Mrs. Radford, has presented a cup for a proposed Women's Squad Drill Competition for No. 3 Region. It is hoped to hold the first competitions in December, the aim being not so much to produce a "crack" team, but rather to have smart and efficient firewomen throughout the Region. Keeness and a competitive spirit at station level should result from these competitions. Drills are to be done in accordance with the N.F.S. Drill Book, certain numbers excepted. One team from each Sub-Division is to compete in the Divisional Competition, the winning squad (12 members) to represent the Division in the Area Competition, and finally the winning squad to represent the Area in the Regional Competition.

Area 7, "A" Division, Part-time

The number of part-time firewomen in Division "A" in No. 7 Fire Force Area during the past twelve months has been making good strides, and has now reached a total of approximately 400. It is gratifying to observe the wholehearted enthusiasm which the firewomen display and their regular attendance at the training classes which have been organised.

The social side of the service is well catered for, when time permits. On the 6th December, a social evening is being held for the Benevolent Fund and it is hoped to have the support of both whole and part-time personnel.

Part-time Group Officer Rowley, F.F.A.7.

Area 8

One of the most outstanding events in No. 3 Region was the holding of the North Midland Region Competitions on Player's Sports Ground, Nottingham, on September 5th. A parade of firemen and firewomen was headed by Divisional Officer Harrington, M.B.E., of 8.C, and the North Midland Region N.F.S. brass band, Commander Firebrace taking the salute. Other distinguished visitors were Sir Arthur Dixon, Lord Trent (the Regional Commissioner), and Mr. Patrick (the Chief Regional Fire Officer). Events included Pump Drill Competitions and Extension Ladder Drill. After very keen competition the men's pump drill was won by No. 9 Area (Northampton) and the women's by No. 10 Area (Skegness), whilst No. 8 Area with a team from Sub-Division 1, "C" Division, won the extension ladder drill in 65 3/5 seconds. The women from Skegness also gave an excellent display of physical training and so evidently it is still "So Bracing" there even in war time.

On Friday, September 11th, we received a visit from Mr. Herbert Morrison. He inspected our Area Training School and reinforcement base at Colwick Race Course, and addressed the personnel who were attending the school, stating that his aim was to make the N.F.S. of this country the finest Fire Fighting Service in the world.

F. M. P.

Area 10

Recent promotions include Group Officer Mrs. Bartlett, who was for some time in charge of the Firewomen's Hostel, Skegness, and was recently appointed Area Officer of No. 10 Area, and has taken up her duties at Area Headquarters, Eastfield House, Louth, Lincs. Mrs. Bartlett's friends all wish her every success in her new work. The new Area Officer attended a recent Senior Officers' Course at Brighton and returned full of new ideas and enthusiasm.

Skegness Hostel is now in the charge of L/Fwmn. Clark and L/Fwmn. Butler.

Group Officer Mrs. Harris has returned to her former work at Boston, "C" Division Headquarters. She has with her Asst. Group Officer Austin (formerly L/Fwmn. at Area Headquarters), and L/Fwmn. Surfleet, Pearson and Deakin.

Amongst recent promotions at Area Headquarters: L/Fwmn. Crompton is now Asst. Group Officer, and Fwmn. Dolby is now L/Fwmn.

At "A" Division Headquarters, Group Officer Mrs. Bishop has with her A.G.O. Miss Malam, and L/Fwmn. Owen and Grey.

At "B" Division Headquarters, Group Officer Naylor has Asst. Group Officers Davis and Pell, and L/Fwmn. Goodman, Green, Stevenson, Sleight and Oakes.

Region V

On Tuesday, 27th October, a visit was paid to London Region Fire Headquarters by Mrs. Roosevelt.

She was accompanied by Mr. Herbert Morrison and Miss Ellen Wilkinson, and appeared to be keenly interested in everything she saw. Mrs. Roosevelt was received by Admiral Sir Edward Evans, the Regional Commissioner for Civil Defence, supported, among others, by Mrs. Cuthbert, Mrs. Keith and Mrs. Hicks (Fire Staff Dept., Home Office), and all the Senior Area Officers of the London Region. She witnessed a display by the London Fire Forces including a massed physical training demonstration and trailer pump drill, both by firewomen; the women's side of the work was, in fact, stressed throughout her visit.

Later, Mrs. Roosevelt inspected a number of special appliances, and addressed the parade in her charming, natural manner.

Mrs. Roosevelt also saw a small exhibition of toys made by personnel for firemen's orphans, but she was impressed most of all, perhaps, by the "Blitz" film. No doubt by this time Mrs. Roosevelt will have been giving America her first-hand impression of England's firemen and firewomen.

In connection with Mrs. Roosevelt, the Editor is grateful to the "News-Chronicle" for permission to reprint the following, sent by that paper's own Correspondent in Washington. (It appeared on America's first Wartime Thanksgiving Day at the end of her column "My Day.") Someone wrote to Mrs. Roosevelt and asked what there was to be thankful for. Here is her reply:—

"I can think of a thousand things in the past for which I am deeply thankful. But it is for the future really that I am most grateful—for the chance to try again to build a decent world; for the young people who are so much better educated in world affairs than we were 20 odd years ago, and who have hopes and visions but who stand four-square and face the realities of life.

I am grateful for the fact that my country is made up of many peoples; that I have the opportunity to show I really believe that all men are created equal, and that the 'last' Commandment, 'Love thy neighbour,' really means what it says; for the fact that my boys are still alive, that other boys whom I love have not yet fallen on any field of battle; for my husband's strength, and for his belief in God.

For all these things, dear God, I am most humbly grateful."

Area 34, "A," "B" and "C" Divisions

Dances and socials have been well to the fore since the last issue of this Magazine. B.1 Sub-Division and letter stations have had many dances; one of these was a farewell party to Group Officer Walters who was

transferring to Twickenham. The appliance room was again transformed into a gaily coloured hall decorated with flags and bunting. Group Officer Walters won the raffle prize to the envy of many (it was a bottle of rum). We wish her good luck and hope she will be happy on her new Division.

A.5 Manchester Square celebrated the opening of the newly decorated bar, "S.S. Chiltern"; the mural designs were painted by Frmn. Simpson who was also the compère for the evening—an extremely gay affair. The bar was built to represent the inside of a ship and certainly looked most novel. A painting by Simpson was raffled, the proceeds collected for the Firemen's Benevolent Fund. Mr. Benton, Mr. Skillen, Mr. MacDuell, D/O Locke were present, also Miss Oddy and others who had once been attached to the old "No. 2."

"C" Division have held quite a number of dances, one of particular note at C.2.Z certainly topped the bill with a station cabaret of entirely local talent which was extremely good.

A team of firewomen from "B" spent a very pleasant evening with the Wrens at England's Lane. A very large number of Wrens were gathered together to listen to the Quiz Competition which was both amusing and instructional; they won by a ½ of a point. Refreshments were then served, a most welcome break after such mental strain. Afterwards the table tennis matches were commenced and the firewomen carried off all the prizes, winning both the doubles and singles.

Netball season is again in full swing and the "A" and "G" Team have so far won all their matches. Congratulations to all players—may they keep up the record.

Members of "A," "B" and "C" took part in a parade on Sunday, 15th November. Firewomen, firemen, police and all members of Civil Defence marched to Westminster Abbey to attend a most impressive Service which also marked the inauguration of the year of office of Councillor H. V. Day as Mayor of the City of Westminster. A similar parade but on a larger scale took place at St. Paul's where His Majesty the King took the salute.

J. H. Lowenthal.

Area 35. Experiment in Music

Congratulations to "A" Division, 35 Area, Region V, for the enterprise shown in starting a Music Group. Fortunate in the possession of musicians who could, and would, give educational lecture-recitals of about an hour's duration, the first was held on 2nd November and was a great success. Coy./Offr. Hiseman (O/C Training, "A" Div. 1 H.Q.) was one of the principal participants and gave the introductory talk; Coy./Offr. Ferguson sang a number of songs by Franz Schubert, as well as a group of Elizabethan and modern ones by English composers; and Frmn. Ian McGregor Condie played a number of Chopin's works, including the polonaise known as the "Polish Song of Victory."

A modest audience of about two dozen was expected, but quite a hundred turned up, including Divisional, Group, Column and Company Officers! Everyone agreed that the promoters had realised their ideal, which in their own words is: "To provide an alternative and more cultured form of entertainment than has hitherto been offered N.F.S. personnel. Usually what is termed 'classical music' is promptly dubbed high-brow and considered boring. It is hoped to show that this need not be the case . . . and that melodies written by the classical composers are very much pleasanter than those which pass nowadays for dance music." That they succeeded was shown by the

insistent demand for more lecture-recitals on the same lines.

Other Divisions interested should get in touch with Coy./Offr. Hiseman, who is most anxious to spread the good work, and encourage N.F.S. talent.

M. P.

Area 37, A.12

The social side of 37 A.12 has been quite bright since the last issue of the Magazine. We have had a number of good dances which were as usual very well attended and greatly enjoyed by all, especially the one given in aid of 37 Area Agility Team, who gave us a very fine display of their "abilities." All who saw their "Floor Show," including the A.F.F.C. (North), Mr. Thompson, our S.A.O. Miss Davis, and D/O Cleaver, were much impressed by their excellent performance.

Barbara's Juveniles paid us a third visit, and the following week the "Brook Players" ably presented "Ladies in Retirement," all the players giving a very fine performance. Next came 37 F.2.Y's Dramatic Society who gave an excellent presentation of Edgar Wallace's "On the Spot." The highlight of the evening was the outstanding performance of Reginald Cooper in the character of "Tony Perelli."

The 19th of November brought us another dance in aid of the Benevolent Fund, the music provided by the ever popular "Stan Kewley's" Dance Band. Altogether A.12 has been lucky in having so many events, and thanks are due to the Entertainments Committee who have worked so hard making the arrangements, much appreciated by all.

E. R.

Area 38, "F" Division

A fine display by firewomen and firemen was given on Saturday, 17th October, at the New Fire Station, Old Town. Although the weather was dull a good crowd assembled to watch the display. Trick motor-cycling, hook ladder and escape drill, and turntable ladder rescue drill were carried out by the men; but most interesting of all was the drill by F.1.Z's firewomen's pump crew. Not only did they beat the firemen in the pump drill, but their exhibition of hose running was a very fine show and they certainly deserved all the complimentary remarks that were made. Later the same month this crew competed against Caterham firewomen's pump crew, and were again successful.

Squad drill has at last got going and some firewomen from "F" have joined in the drill at Elmcourt T.C.



3rd Course, Regional Training School, Region VI.

for the Area Display. One or two comments have been heard during the marches to the drill ground, such as: "They look smart. Who are they? What are they? N.F.S.! Never 'eard of 'em!"

And another: "Thank God, we still have a navy!"—we are still wondering why we caused that remark!

During the past few weeks we have had various "Quiz" and "Brain-Trust" meetings at F.1.Z and some very entertaining as well as educational questions and discussions have taken place. We hope we shall be able to have these more often in future.

Cricket and Football Clubs have also held dances which have been very successful, well attended and appreciated by all.

M. Y.

(Note.—The Editor remembers watching a group of trainees drilling, in very assorted garments, in the early days of the war. Next her stood an old man who at last could bear the spectacle no longer. As he was tottering away he paused in front of her, and pointing to the irregular lines with his stick said sarcastically: "England's last 'ope!'")

Region VI

Opening of Women's Regional Training School

On the 1st October in bright autumnal sunshine, the Women's Regional Training School of No. 6 Region, was formally opened by Sir Harry Haig, the Regional Commissioner.

Among those present were Mr. H. M. Smith, Chief Regional Fire Officer; Mrs. Moore, Woman Regional Fire Staff Officer; Mr. R. C. Charters, Fire Force Commander, and Senior Area Officer Bury (Area 14); Mr. D. M. Taylor, Fire Force Commander, and Assistant Area Officer Barron (Area 15); Mr. E. T. Hayward, Fire Force Commander, and Senior Area Officer Ryland (Area 16); and members of the Women's Voluntary Service who supplement the crew of the mobile kitchen stationed at the School.

The School itself is an attractive house of flint and brick, standing in a delightful garden, with woods and fields surrounding, and a natural pond which is used for pump drill. The old barn houses the mobile kitchen and light trailer pumps and instruction, under the direction of the Officer in Charge and four instructresses, takes place in a hut erected in the grounds away from the house and comprising a lecture room and model control rooms. Subjects in the curriculum include N.F.S. organisation, mobilising, communications, telephony, occurrence book

keeping, first aid, gas, hose repair, topography, squad drill, fire prevention, light pump drill and stirrup pump drill.

Recreation is taken on the tennis court during fine weather and in the tastefully decorated rest room in the evenings.

The courses taken by 30 students at a time extends over a period of two weeks, each course winding up with a social evening or dance.

Group Officer

Elsie Gardener,

W.R.T.S., Glen House,

Salisbury Green,

Near Southampton.

Area 15

Allow me first to introduce ourselves, and very soon
Request attention for the sport this pleasant afternoon.
Everybody round about the meadow to be seen
Are from the four Divisions of this Area fifteen.

For grouped on grass, or rugs, or chairs (befitting the
position),
Interest is centered on the Light Pump Competition.
Fifteen Area to-day holds every thumb hard up,
That we perhaps may win and hold the longed-for
Barrow Cup.
Every team lined up in turn; it's "D" Division
first
(Each one wondering secretly if first or last is worst).
No firewoman in the drill but does not know her part.

High tension grips the audience. They're off, and
from the start
In every heart there springs a hope. On every lip a
wish
Guides nimble fingers on, and when we hear the
welcome "Swish,"
"Hurrah" bursts from us, that's not bad, but still we
must confess,
Let's hope the H.Q. team can beat them to it none
the less.
In time H.Q. lines up—and well, to cut the tale, we do,
Grim determination wins. One minute forty two.
However all the fun's not through, and what a waste
of water
To empty out the mobile dam without . . . we really
oughter . . .

And so we do. With shouts and whoops the fire-
women dash,
No need to add the details, but there was a lovely
splash!
Despite the fact we had the hose turned on us for our
pain.

(For officers are touchy), we would do the same again.
Unfortunately everything must soon or later, finish,
No matter how intense the fire, the flames at last
diminish.

Thanks to Miss E. Barron, A.A.O. at H.Q.,
Of course, and to our splendid, indomitable crew,
Day has been so nice, but before we part our ways
(A contribution worthy of at least a word of praise,
You may not see a floating S.C.O. again for days).

Perhaps I'd better thank the ones concerned, we feel
they win
Some thanks for the spontaneous way they drank the
whole thing in.

N. P. Oppenheimer, Area 15 H.Q.

Region X Area 29

The official opening of the extensions to Area 29
F.F. H.Q., which have been erected by National Fire
Service labour, was held on November 20th, when the
Regional Commissioner, Mr. Hartley Shawcross, the
C.R.F.O. and other notable visitors honoured us with
their presence. The most recent activity of our
firewomen during "stand-by" and "off duty" hours
is toy making for the "National Children's Nurseries,"
and there is great competition throughout the area for
the best divisional effort.

The "Accrington Art Club," "A" Division, gave a
delightful performance of "The Doll's House" early

in November in aid of the Benevolent Fund, the show
being attended by F.F.C. Mr. Clitherow. A Civic
Mayoral procession was the occasion for a parade by
the firewomen of this division, who looked very smart.
In "B" Division a Dance was organised by the
"Fireflies" in aid of the Benevolent Fund on November
4th, and it was quite a success notwithstanding inclement
weather. "C" Division have settled down to 48/24
duty. The C.R.F.O. took the salute at a march past of
whole and part-time personnel on November 1st.
The "29 Area" representative for the London Civil
Defence parade was L/Fwmn. Charlton (part-time)
who thoroughly enjoyed a memorable experience.

There was general regret in "D" Division when
D/O Appleton announced his retirement from the
service. Our best wishes to him in his new venture.
Mr. Birtwhistle the new D/O is an electrical and
hydraulic expert. His innovation of weekly meetings
is very much appreciated.

"E" Division (Burnley) introduce themselves as
newcomers to the Magazine, as they have just been
incorporated into Area 29. They send good wishes to
firewomen all over the country. They paraded for
Mayor's Sunday on November 15th, and looked very
trim in their new uniforms. "F" Division (Southport)
are also newcomers to Area 29, and a welcome is ex-
tended to them. Their first parade was held on Civil
Defence Sunday. A dance in aid of the Benevolent
Fund took place on October 29th. The attendance
was below average but a good percentage of part-timers
turned up.

M. L. J.

Region XII

N.F.S. College, Saltdean

Time at the College does not stand still. It hardly
seems possible that on September 29th we celebrated
our first birthday, so swiftly do the days pass.

The Women's Wing, although it has not been part of
the College for a year yet, was proud to be allowed to
join in the celebrations and to contribute in no mean
way to a cheque which was presented to the Com-
mandant by the students, for him to spend as he thought
fit for the benefit of future students and members of the
staff. It will, we feel sure, interest all past students
to know that, as a result, the College is the proud possessor
of a grand piano which affords opportunities for the
talented members to entertain their colleagues and
makes possible "Sing-Songs," which serve to break
the ice during the first evenings of courses.

Progress is the essence of life and certainly the College
lives to progress. The Women's Wing has, up to the
time of writing, held three part-time courses and we feel
we are justified in saying that the part-timers who
attended them were as proud and happy to be able to
do so as we were to welcome them to their College.
We are looking forward to meeting more and more of
our part-time members in future.

With the rapid growth in numbers of the part-time
personnel we realise the need for more members
qualified to train them. The December course, in
addition to a full Junior Officers' course, will include
two short courses for instructors to meet this need.
These instructors' courses will be the forerunners of the
expansion we are looking forward to putting into
operation in earnest after Christmas.

December also brings the first Training Conference to
be held at the College. This should prove to be another
step in the right direction, and while we shall be happy
to welcome its members in our midst, we feel that the

College is the right and fitting place for such a conference.

So we at the College close 1942 with the knowledge of progress made during the past year; looking forward to starting our own second year in January with foundations firmly laid and visions of an even wider future in the year to come.

M. H.

Firemen Artists

Major Jackson (Chief Commander, London Fire Forces) has become President of the Firemen Artists' Committee, and F.F.C., Mr. Blackstone will preside at meetings. In connection with the National Savings Committee's "Wings for Victory" week in London, there is to be a special Exhibition in March. All interested should write at once for particulars to: Frmn. R. E. S. Coram, Firemen Artists, 94, Southwark Bridge Road, London, S.E.1.

The Provincial Tour which started some months ago—in June, to be exact—has proved so successful that it has now been extended well into next year. It is under the auspices of The Museums Association, and will visit the following towns:—

Leicester—January 2nd to 24th.

Lincoln—February 7th to 28th.

Doncaster—March 13th to April 4th.

Derby—April 14th to May 5th.

Collections taken at these Exhibitions go to the N.F.S. Benevolent Fund.

"Requisitioned Form."

Drawn by Fwmn. Dean, Region V, Area 38.



(It is suggested that an up-to-date title for above would be:—

"Austerity Christmas—No Mistletoe!")

Marriages

4th April, 1942.—Fwmn. Green, Region V, Area 34, C.2.Z, to Frmn. H. J. Crick, C.1.Y.

6th June, 1942.—Fwmn. Knight, Region V, Area 34, C.2.Z, to Mr. A. W. Warner.

12th September, 1942.—Fwmn. Crumpton, Region V, Area 34, C.2.Z, to Sgt./Pilot Lovejoy, R.A.F.

19th September, 1942.—Fwmn. Smith, Region X, Area 29, "E" Div., to A/C.1. Barry, R.A.F.

29th September, 1942.—Fwmn. Broadley, Region X, Area 29, "E" Div., to Mr. R. Steel.

8th October, 1942.—Fwmn. Caldwell, Region V, London H.Q. Formation, to Mr. G. W. Moore.

10th October, 1942.—Fwmn. Wray, Region V, London H.Q. Formation, to A/C.1. W. Allen.

10th October, 1942.—L/Fwmn. Dorothy Deane, to Coy./Offr. E. A. Roberts, both of Region VI, Area 15 H.Q.

17th October, 1942.—L/Fwmn. Amos, Region V, London H.Q. Formation, to L/Cl. E. O'Connell.

17th October, 1942.—Fwmn. Dobson, Region V, Area 34, B.3.Z, to Pte. Timms, Rifle Brigade.

17th October, 1942.—Fwmn. R. Stern, Region V, London H.Q. Formation, to Pte. Wilkinson.

24th October, 1942.—Fwmn. M. Langford, Region V, London H.Q. Formation, to Lt. R. Allan.

24th October, 1942.—Fwmn. F. Lewis, Region V, London H.Q. Formation, to D/R. R. Thew, Region V, Area 38, A.4.T.

—November, 1942.—Fwmn. Baird, Region X, Area 29, "C" Div., to Guardsman Reed, Welsh Guards.

5th November, 1942.—Fwmn. Waterman, Region V, London H.Q. Formation, to Pte. Budd.

14th November, 1942.—Fwmn. P. M. Bradbury, Region III, Area 9, Div. "B" H.Q., to Pte. H. Brookes.

16th November, 1942.—Fwmn. Murphy, Region V, Area 34, C.2.Z, to Frmn. Smith, C.2.X.

24th November, 1942.—Fwmn. P. Discombe, Region VII, Area 19, "A" Div. H.Q., to Frmn. W. E. Horstead, A.1.Z.

28th November, 1942.—L/Fwmn. E. Page, Region VII, Area 19, A.2.Y, to Frmn. A. T. Freeman, A Maintenance Section.

Engagement

Fwmn. Eileen Sheahan, Region V, Area 37, A.2.Z, to Allen Wright, R.A.F.

Fwmn. Billington, Region X, Area 29, "B" Div., to Mr. Harold Cook.

Birth

27th September, 1942.—To Mrs. Hutton (formerly Fwmn. Wiffen, Region V, London H.Q. Formation), a son.

Nonsense Rhyme Competition

This has been held over to next issue, and entries (for rules see September–October issue), will be accepted—in common with other items—up to 25th January, 1943, to The Editor, N.F.S. Firewomen's Magazine, 5, Regent's Park Road, Gloucester Gate, London, N.W.1.

"OUR OTHER LIVES" No. XXII.

MRS. LENA RADFORD,

Regional Woman Officer, N.F.S., Region III

Mrs. Radford always describes herself as a "mongrel," having had an Irish grandfather and a Scottish grandmother on her mother's side, and a Yorkshire father. Moreover, she has lived long enough in Cornwall and London to be taken either for a Londoner or a Cornish woman! She was born in the West Indies, in Jamaica, at the foot of the Blue Mountains, and though she left there when she was quite a child, she has retained ever since a passion for the tropical lands of the new world—the West Indies, Mexico, Guatemala.

In the last-named country two of her brothers grew coffee, and the elder one inviting her to visit him there in the nineteen twenties—those years that seem to belong to another age and another world—offered her as a bait "a volcano, an earthquake and a revolution." Since his coffee "Finca" was on the side of Santa Maria, the perpetually, though generally mildly, eruptive volcano, his promise of a volcano and an earthquake was certain to be fulfilled, and fulfilled it was, but the revolution, oddly enough in that land of political unrest, did not materialise until she was again safely in England.

Mrs. Radford married when she was very young and her first husband was killed in the last war. After his death she did war work in the Ministry of Pensions, was Secretary to a Wimpole Street doctor, and acted as Appeal Organiser to a big London Hospital.

She has served on many Committees, these including the Ministry of Labour, Girls' Clubs, Juvenile Employment, Borstal Voluntary Committees, and also a number of social and political committees.

During the last twelve years, with her husband and two sons she has lived in Nottingham and spent her time "cultivating her garden." Her great loves—in addition to them—are the country and the theatre, ballet, and painting and sculpture. She has a particularly personal interest in the last for her sister is Edna Manley, a well-known sculptress whose work may be seen in many art galleries, here and abroad.

Wherever Mrs. Radford has lived her home has always been one in which social and political



problems were enthusiastically debated and discussed, and a rallying point for all those, young or old, who wanted "to tidy up the world." Perhaps that is the result of having an economist for a husband!

The second World War has engulfed her as the first one did. Her elder boy is a soldier, and Mrs. Radford herself, like so many others in the N.F.S., finds that the Fire Service is a completely absorbing job. She says she has neither time nor inclination for anything else!

M. L. H.

They're Good, Our Girls

"Three-Six" girls at drills are good!
To get a thrill you really should
See them lined upon the square,
Tall and short, and dark and fair.

The Commander he is proud of them,
I heard him tell them so!
'Twas grand to see them marching
At the recent Reg'nal show.

Mrs. Roosevelt watched with int'rest,
And she whispered low: "Hooray!"
"I'll tell my folk about them
"When I'm back in U.S.A."

Now all you other drillers,
If you think your Offr. can shout—
Just come and watch the "36" girls
As they form and turn about!

L/Fwmn. McIntyre, Area 36 H.Q.

Rules to Prevent Fires in the Cities

By Andrew Yarranton, 1677

Reprinted from November issue of "Lilliput" by courtesy of Hulton Press, Ltd.

There Masons, Carpenters, Brick-layers and Joiners at their making Free, are put into the List with the rest to be alwayes ready to help to quench and prevent the spreading of Fires; Fifteen of the Substantial Citizens Commissionated for to look to the well ordering of all things relating thereunto; an Engineer and his Assistants made and settled; two Sentinels appointed with Houses built for to hold the Water Engines in, and to put in the Engineers Ingredients . . .

These things being made and done, then the Sentinel hath a Place on the top of the highest Steeple whereby he may look all over the Town; one is by Day, the other by Night; and every two Hours in the Night he plays half an hour upon a Flagelet, being very delightful in the Night: and he looks round the City; if he observes any Smoak or Fire or danger of Fire, he presently sounds a Trumpet and hangs out a bloody Flag, towards that Quarter of the City where the Fire is.

Immediately all the people which are for the quenching of the Fires, with the Commissioners and Engineers, or as many as are in Town, run to the place; and presently the Commissioners or any two of them with the Engineers give the necessary orders for the suppressing of the Fire, either by pulling down or blowing up the Houses.

All the Labourers obey in assisting to pull down, carrying the goods that must be removed to the Houses appointed, fetching the Water being ready filled in Copper Tubs upon Sleds.

And one side of the square are the Houses for the Water Engines; the Rooms at the end of the square are for the Engineers Ingredients; and the other side of the square is Rooms to put such goods in as they take from the Houses that are blown up or pulled down . . . The Copper Tubs

are fixed upon the Sleds in the open square; and all the Doors of the buildings are made outwards, by which the people may come to the Tubs of Water with Horses backwards and forwards uninterrupted.

And things being thus fitted and ordered, it is very seldom that above three Houses are ruined by Fire. And if this prevention, Rule and Order were not, it's impossible but upon the breaking out of Fire the greatest part of the Cities would be destroyed; for many Cities are built of Fir, which is very full of Turpentine.

Now with us in England upon the breaking out of great Fires, all the Rable runs crying Fire, Fire, to the great affrightment and amazement of most people near where the Fire is, and makes it worse than really it is. Besides, these sorts of sudden Frights cost many Poor Women their Lives; and sometimes it goeth near the Man too. And another sort of people run to Rob and Steal, and it's feared to increase the Fires into the Bargain, that they may better bring to pass their wicked ends.

But pray you write by this copy here set you, and then the Fires may be prevented, the peoples' fears allay'd and their minds quieted, and all people lye quiet in their Beds except those employed.

You will ask me by what Authority this shall be done, and who shall pay the charge? I say it must be done by Act of Parliament, and the several Cities and great Towns must bear their own charges in providing Houses and setting all in order. But, you will say, Our Parliament men will not do it for us. I cannot help that, but if they will not, in my second part I will draw the form of the Bill which shall fit the purpose.

Fire Service Commandments

Thou shalt only covet thy neighbour's stripe.
(If you think you could do better than he can.)

Thou shalt only use profanity.
(When Col. H.Q. forgets to book out.)

Thou shalt only commit murder.
(When there is an exercise held at 3 a.m.)

Thou shalt only steal.
(When D.H.Q. have something better than you have.)

Thou shalt only bear false witness.
(When the occurrence book has to be "Cooked" three or four minutes.)

Thou shalt only work on the Sabbath Day.
(With exercises or fires—and all the work that has to be done during the week.)

880153, Region XII, Area 32, A.3.Z.

Recipes

FRUIT CAKE (No eggs or milk required.)

2 cups fruit. 1 cup sugar. 1 cup water.

Boil together and leave till cool. Rub 2 ozs. of margarine into 2 cups of plain flour. Add 1 teaspoonful bicarbonate of soda and 1 teaspoonful of baking powder. Nutmeg or other flavouring. Stir in cold fruit and bake in a moderate oven.

L/Fw. Capstick, "C" Div. H.Q., Region I.

WAR-TIME CHOCOLATE MOUSSE.

1½ ozs. cornflour
1 oz. sugar
1 pint of milk

A pinch of salt
A pat. of butter
3 ozs. cocoa or chocolate powder

Boil the milk with the sugar, butter and salt. Mix the cornflour and cocoa together into a smooth paste with some of the milk and a little water. Pour the boiling milk on the paste and return to saucepan, bring to boil and stir until a smooth thick creamy consistency.

Pour into an open dish and allow to cool.

W. B. Region XII, Area 32.

"WE SERVE"

No. 5.

By Group Officer

B. G. Calderwood.

Region I, H.Q.



In June of this year the National Fire Service, No. 1 (Northern) Region, became the proud possessor of what is to-day a most unique "special appliance." This appliance is known as a Mobile Laundry and was presented to No. 1 Region by Thomas Hedley & Company, Limited, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. It is the third of its kind to be built in Newcastle by this Company and already the other two have done splendid work on Tyneside, in Hull and York.

First, may we introduce you to the laundry itself—it is constructed on a Leyland 'bus chassis and draws a Dyson Trailer. In the 'bus chassis four Hot-Point Washing Machines are installed, together with four sinks and a large drying cabinet capable of dealing with the complete output of the washing machines every 12 minutes. The Trailer carries two water tanks to hold over 1,000 gallons and a generating plant which generates enough electricity to light a village inhabited by 6,000 persons. This plant provides current for heating the water and drying the clothes as well as for lighting. Altogether the whole unit is able to wash and dry 1,000 garments per day. An electric oven and hot plate are provided for the crew in case they are unable to obtain meals whilst operating in a "blitzed" area. The unit is self-contained and carries enough water for a full day's washing without having recourse to a local water supply.

Needless to say, this is a great blessing to "bombed-out" families, as they are able to take their clothes to the Mobile Laundry and collect them the same day, washed and dried, and, this is the most important factor, *all free of charge*.

With the decrease in heavy raiding it was felt that such a unit would be of inestimable value to large organisations, which were having to cope with large washings. Thus it was that we became the fortunate organisation in this Region to receive

one of these Model Laundries. However, although the laundry is primarily for the use of the National Fire Service at the various training schools in the Region, at the same time it is in readiness for use should there be a call from a town for civilian work after a raid. The Chief Regional Fire Officer has agreed that it can be sent, manned by Fire Service personnel if not required for fire-fighting duties, to any target town within the Region, and arrangements have been made for it to be available to adjacent Regions and Scotland, should the occasion arise.

It only requires four women to operate the laundry, with a fireman driver, who is responsible for the maintenance of the equipment. A number of firewomen were trained in the operation of the laundry by demonstrators employed by Thomas Hedley & Company, Limited, and they, in turn, have trained other firewomen in the Region, so that an adequate staff is available at a moment's notice. At the same time we have received generous offers of assistance from the Women's Voluntary Service and teams of their members have been organised and trained so that they are ready to come to our aid during raids.

Already the laundry has been put to the test and proved its worth, particularly at No. 1 Regional Reserve Station and Training School, where the problem of washing for such large numbers as are accommodated there has been successfully solved.

The Home Secretary and Miss Ellen Wilkinson, M.P., saw the Mobile Laundry in operation at this station and expressed their appreciation of its value to the Service.

During recent demonstrations it was gratifying to note how interested the public were in our "special appliance" and in turn the National Fire Service was glad of the opportunity to show that their services to the public were not confined entirely to fire fighting.

Calling All Firewomen *By Frwmm. Blackmore, Region III, Area 9, "A" Div.*

The war has been the cause of many changes, and not the least of these is the forming of large communities in which every member must sink his or her own personality to fall in with the plan which is made for the easiest method of organising individuals in the mass. And so we find ourselves in a similar position in the National Fire Service. Most of us have been used to running our lives more or less how we liked; for although we have had work, in pre-war days the work has not required the discipline which is automatically enforced when one joins a Service.

Now it is not always easy to change one's way of life quickly, and for that reason I want to put forward a few points which it is well to bear in mind.

In the first place, that it is not *we* who are honouring the Fire Service by joining it, but the Fire Service which is honouring *us* by accepting us as its members.

Secondly, that although grumbling is considered a right, it can be a very dangerous weapon against the general morale; it is a first-rate agent for spreading discontent, and so let us think twice before we speak, and unless we have something constructive in mind, let us not speak at all.

Thirdly, it is well to remember that we have joined the Service, not for what we can get out of it, but for

what we can put into it.

Fourthly (and this is a big point!), we *must* be willing to accept the numerous changes which are bound to come in so young a Service as the N.F.S., and we must do everything in our power to make these changes easy, even if we do not personally agree with them; for although change for change's sake is not necessarily good, it does at least show that the society which it alters is alive and growing—and the N.F.S. is still a small child. There are good brains at the top, and it is from these brains that the changes come, and no community will stand if the members are pulling against each other. So let us all push together, come what may, with one object in view—Victory—and although it is difficult to realise it, it still remains a truth that the Big Victory will be won, in the long run, by the accumulation of small victories which have been and will be won in the stations, sub-divisions, divisions and areas all over England.

We have now, perhaps, the greatest opportunity we will ever have to show our worth as a link in the immense chain of our National life. Remember that: "The strength of the chain is that of its weakest link." I, for one, am convinced that *that* link will never be found in the National Fire Service.



Inside the laundry.

A Girl in Uniform

She's only one in a million,
One who is doing her bit,
Doing her bit for her country,
In the job for which she is fit.
She did not ask for her change in life,
But she does not reason why,
She carries on with the job in hand,
Wherever her duties lie.

She came from country to city,
To a frightening busy world,
To noise and traffic and bustle
From a peaceful land she was hurled.
Or again, from city to country,
To quiet leafy lanes,
To muddy fields and spotted cows
Instead of plate glass panes.

In factory, field and barrack room
She takes the place of man,
To make the guns, or work the guns,
She's doing all she can.
Perhaps an all-night vigil
In a building she will keep,
With ears and eyes alert and keen,
So that a few may sleep.

And as each day you pass her by,
In town or country fair,
Just smile and pass a word to her,
A kindly greeting spare.
She may be tired and lonely—
She's often far from home—
She's doing her bit for the land she loves,
Need she do it all alone?

*B. K. D.,
N.F.S. Training College, Brighton.*

Christmas in Yesterday's Norway

By M.B., Region X, Area 28, "A" Div. H.G.

When some friends of mine who owned a hotel in Western Norway invited me to spend Christmas with them I was delighted, as I had never before been offered an opportunity of seeing Norway in white.

On sailing from Newcastle three days before Christmas, I bade farewell to an England of mists and a chilly, penetrating dampness. As the ship approached Bergen it was still cold, but with a difference; here, the atmosphere was dry and invigorating, keen and clear. Bergen looked enchanting. The surrounding hills seemed to be dotted with hundreds of twinkling Peter Pan huts, while in the town people hurried to and fro along the streets, many of them carrying Christmas trees which had been bought in the famous fish market, now devoid of its usual wares. (No family in Norway lacked its Christmas tree, it simply wasn't done!)

At eight o'clock on the following morning I caught the 'bus which left for the Hardanger district. When we drove out of the town it was quite dark, and not until we had been travelling for over an hour did the sky lighten. After we had passed the village of Aadland, and were really climbing into the mountains, the road became so icy that it was necessary to fasten chains on to the 'bus wheels, and even then we had one skid, fortunately into the mountain wall and not the ravine which lay to the right of us.

A thin coating of snow lay by the road edge, over which were poised malignant fingers of ice that hung from the jutting mountain sides. All the waterfalls were practically frozen, the great Brattefoss being one fantastic mass of ice through which only a meagre trickle of water persisted in making its way to the diminished stream below. The smaller Steinfalsfoss, which we passed on our descent into the village of Norheimsund, looked more fairy-like, and although the snow did not extend down as far as the valley the roads were still covered with ice.

The hotel was closed for alteration, and in addition to myself there was only one other guest, a young man who was a friend of Fru Sandven's son. Christmas Eve, rather than Christmas Day, is celebrated in Norway, and in the morning my fellow visitor and I were sent for a walk while Fru Sandven and her three children retired into the lounge to become engrossed in the important process of decorating the tree. We did offer to help, but this was received with shrieks of horror by the entire female section of the household!

In the evening we walked into a transformed lounge. A long table, festooned with gay decorations, stretched from one end of the room to the other, while behind it the Christmas tree, a symphony in green, red and silver, almost brushed the ceiling with its topmost branches as it proudly glittered in the light of the log fire and candles.

The Sandven family was present in full force as befitted such an occasion; Grandpapa, Fru Sandven—called Tante Nelly by her children's friends—her sister Tante Hannemor, the three children, Sigrid, Olav and Anne-Margrete, several relations, and in addition, one or two friends who had been invited in for the evening. When dinner was over we followed the old Norwegian custom of dancing and singing carols round the tree, after which the presents were ceremoniously distributed; then before long the older members of the company went to bed. The rest of us sat round the fire eating fruit and nuts, drinking skaals to one another in excellent home-made wine, talking and singing with an occasional interval of dancing until the flames had died down to a mere glow and it was Christmas Day, when we arose, exchanged wishes for a Merry

Christmas—perhaps this was slightly superfluous!—and climbed upstairs to bed.

On Christmas morning we went to the local church, a quiet and austere building which was crowded, the last members of the congregation to enter even sitting in its single centre aisle. Some of the peasants were in national costume, while others, old women with fine, weather-beaten faces, wore shawls over their heads. The service was simple, but the sermon, delivered by an earnest young man garbed in a black cassock which was surmounted by a white ruff, was the longest I had ever heard and put a speedy end to my conviction that I would soon be able to understand Norwegian perfectly.

After Christmas Day there was a slight fall of snow, so we went up into the mountains above Norheimsund for an afternoon's ski-ing, a sport of which I had merely had three days' experience in my schooldays. In spite of this, I found to my surprise that I was able to walk tolerably well, and plodded happily along in the wake of the rest of the party until we reached the slopes, down which they ski-ed and I fell realising with pleasure, however, that each time I started once more from the top I was able to keep my balance for a little longer before the inevitable collapse. In between my own efforts I watched those of the others, particularly Olav Sandven, the champion jumper of the district. Later we went down to the Sandvens' mountain saeter where, tired but happy, we lit the fire, played the gramophone and lazily danced until the car arrived to take us back to Norheimsund.

On one afternoon we went up to see the newly-completed hut of a Bergen millionaire. Actually it was far too resplendent to be called by that name, having an electric plant attached to it, hot and cold water (a luxury which was in no other hut in the locality) and even a shower bath; the floor of the living-room was covered with deep soft rugs, there was a handsome stone fireplace, and we all greatly admired a window of beautiful stained glass at one end of the room. The millionaire and his family were charming; they had met none of us before, but welcomed us as old friends with typical Norwegian hospitality, and three bottles of champagne were opened in honour of the first meeting with the "Royal Sandvens" as our host called them.

When we left the hut the boys ski-ed down to the Sandven saeter while Fru Sandven, Tante Hannemor, Sigrid and I returned on foot. It was twilight as we walked, or rather slid, home in the frosty air. The shadows deepened in the mountains, there was no sound apart from our footfalls—and laughter when the two Tantes abruptly sat down together on the icy path—and to complete the witchery of the evening we saw a shooting star. What more could one ask!

Before I sailed from Bergen—I was due to arrive in England for New Year's Eve—there were several more parties, including one at the manufacturing village of Aalvik, about an hour's drive away, where I was impressed by the sight of an enormous Christmas tree glowing with lights which stood in the yard of the big factory there—and on the morning of my departure the end of the fjord was frozen. My friends went skating, but I had no time for more than a salutary slither on the ice before sadly returning indoors to pack. By that evening I was in Bergen; the next morning I sailed and as we steamed down the fjord I thought of Norway, white and gracious in winter, and of her people, honest, hardworking, courteous and gay, and felt that I should always know a thrill, as of a home-coming, each time that I gazed afresh at those first barren coastal islands, so deceptively inhospitable-looking, which guard a land of such kind enchantment.

Call to Duty

Whilst walking along one day I did see
A bright red poster beckoning to me,
The bold black letters were asking for
Women to help the N.F.S. win the War.

I looked, I wondered, I sighed, I fell ;
Went to the Station and rang the bell.
A fireman came out and took me in,
And this is where my story begins.

A minute's wait and I stood at the door
Of what I was told was the A.G.O.,
She gave me such a friendly grin
That she had no trouble in roping me in.

Next morning at nine I made my way
Back to the Station, this time to stay,
I expected a uniform, smart and neat,
But the story of that is up the next street.

The time soon came when I woke in the night,
Jerry had come, what an awful fright,
The blitz was on, my knees were a jelly,
Began to wish I had stayed with Aunt Nelly.

But later when warm in my bed I lay,
I was glad to have taken part in the fray,
And though in the morning our number was less,
I was proud to be part of the grand N.F.S.

Anon., Region VII, Area 19.

An Extra "Light" now Manned

One day while at the station
We watched the men at drill,
We saw just how a pump was manned—
To us it was a thrill.

They asked us then, if we would try,
At first we answered "No."
And then just for the sport of it
We said we'd have a go.

Our first attempt was not so good,
We were scratched and bruised a bit,
Until we made a better run,
We said we would not quit.

So came three weeks of practice,
Then much to our delight,
Another Team was challenged
To a drill one Friday night.

And though the other Team did well,
I am proud to say we won—
I hope we were a credit
To Sub-Division One.

This did not end our practice,
And still we kept in trim :
We'll challenge any other Team,
And may the best one win.

Fwmn. Richardson, Region III, Area 8.



To an Un-Named Hero— The Carrier Pigeon

On and on, thro' the blue,
What an exquisite thing
Is the light on his wing ;
He'll win thro'.

On and on, thro' night skies,
Tho' 'planes round him hover,
He scorns to take cover,
How swiftly he flies.

On and on, thro' the dawn,
Near the end of his flight,
His goal is in sight,
He is weary and worn.

On and on, homeward bound,
A wind that is kind
Follows softly behind ;
He delights in the sound.

On and on, skies are clear,
The morning is bright,
The shore is in sight,
Home is near.

On and on, thro' the blue,
What an exquisite thing
Is the light on his wing :
He's won thro' !

Part-timer, Region V.

"Behind the scenes at Clothing Stores."

J. H. Lowenthal Region V Area 34.

Representatives

Region 1

Asst. Group Offr. B. G. Calderwood, Northern Regional H.Q., Fire Department, Eskdale Terrace, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 2.

Region 2

Frwmn. Kirke, No. 3 Area H.Q., Red House, Moorgate, Rotherham.

Frwmn. (Mrs.) E. M. Foster, No. 4 Area H.Q., "Quarry Dene," Weetwood Lane, Leeds, 6.

Frwmn. W. Smith, No. 5 Area H.Q., Ashburnham Grove, Bradford.

Asst. Group Offr. Miss G. Swift, No. 6 Area, "A" Div. H.Q., 108-110, Westbourne Crescent, Hull.

Region 3

Asst. Group Offr. Stewart, No. 10 Area H.Q., Eastfield House, Louth, Lincs.

Region 4

Miss J. McCormick, N.F.S., Eastern Civil Defence Region, St. Regis, Montague Road, Cambridge.

Asst. Group Offr. Mrs. S. C. Johnson, No. 12 Area H.Q., Whitney Wood, Stevenage, Herts.

Region 5

London H.Q. Formation—Frwmn. Good, Whitgift House, Lambeth, S.E.1.

No. 34 Area (A, B and C).—L/Frwmn. Lowenthal, Div. H.Q., Queen Mary's Home, Heath Street, N.W.3.

No. 34 Area (D, E and F).—Frwmn. W. Merchant, Central Fire Station, Uxbridge Road, W.13.

No. 35 Area.—Asst. Group Offr. Miss F. Fox, N.F.S., D.2.Z Station, Suffolk Square, Hartford Road, Enfield Highway.

No. 36 Area (part).—L/Frwmn. Compton, Fire Station, Tabernacle Street, E.C.2.

No. 37 Area (H.Q. and A, B, C and D).—Frwmn. E. Robinson, Fire Station, 94, Southwark Bridge Road, S.E.1.

No. 37 Area (E and F).—Asst. Group Offr. N. Smith, Fire Station, South Street, Bromley, Kent.

No. 38 Area (A, B and C).—Group Offr. Miss Crips, Fire Station, Old Town, Clapham, S.W.4.

No. 38 Area (D).—Mrs. Thomas, 108, Edenfield Gardens, Worcester Park, Surrey.

No. 38 Area (E and F).—Group Offr. Miss Young, Fire Station, Park Lane, Croydon, Surrey.

Region 6

A.G.O. Miss M. Wardroper, N.F.S., No. 14 Area H.Q., Wintershill Hall, Dursley, Bishop's Waltham, Hants.

Frwmn. N. Oppenheimer, No. 15 Area H.Q., White Place, Taplow, Bucks.

Region 7

L/Frwmn. R. Denford, N.F.S., No. 17 Area Training School, 2, Downleaze, Stoke Bishop, Bristol, 9.

A.A.Offr. Mrs. Knowlden, N.F.S., No. 18 Area, "A" Div. H.Q., Crossmead, Exeter.

A.G.O. Miss V. F. Weeks, N.F.S., No. 19 Area H.Q., St. Vincent's, Yelverton, Devon.

Region 8

A.G.O. Miss D. M. Burnett, N.F.S., No. 8 Regional H.Q., Coryton, Whitechurch, Glam.

Region 9

L/Frwmn. Parker (Regional Rep.), Regional Training School, Carpenter Road, Birmingham.

Frwmn. Irving Jones, Area 23, Bevere Manor, Bevere, nr. Worcester.

Group Offr. Miss Haskins, N.F.S., No. 24 Area H.Q., Hartopp House, Hartopp Road, Four Oaks, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham.

Region 10

A.G.O. Miss Jones, N.F.S., No. 27 Area Pay and Finances, The Hollies, Circular Road, Withington, Manchester.

Asst. Group Offr. M. Bennett, No. 28 Area, Central Fire Station, Bolton, Lancs.

Area Group Offr. Mrs. M. L. Johnson, No. 29 Area F.F. H.Q., "Haslemere," Garstang Road, Broughton, nr. Preston, Lancs.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor.

Were I to deliver this by hand, I would no doubt "throw my hat" into your sacred office before I ventured to enter. As a mere male, may I have your permission to voice my humble opinion on the abilities of our female staffs? As a Divisional Mobilising Officer, it has fallen to my lot to train many raw recruits and I have been very impressed by their adaptability, although they have come from all walks of life. It has amazed me how they have been able to concentrate on a subject which everyone will agree has so many pitfalls. I often wonder, and perhaps someone will enlighten me, as to whether their success is due to slight jealousy between themselves or just the desire to be "one up" on their colleagues. No matter which way the scale may fall, they are doing their job very well indeed—but pity the poor Mobilising Officer when the female temperament is estranged. What tact and patience he must have, to keep in the good books of "both sides." Can this be improved upon? Don't think that it is serious—no doubt the A.G.O. will give a talk on psychology, in fact, I suggest that the colleges include this subject in their syllabus.

Do you firewomen realise how proud we Mobilising Officers are when we learn that you have qualified (and sometimes with distinction) either at Bray, Fareham or Brighton? Not that we claim the credit for it. We do remember, however, that you came to us rather shy and timid, overawed by the impressive Mobilising Boards, thinking to yourself, no doubt, "I shall never learn all this!" Yet what do we find? One stripe here, or two stripes there—and don't you swank!—but you are entitled to do so if you wish, and I for one will pat you on the back, because your efficiency eases our burdens and so I end these words of praise with "Good luck, girls!"

A. H. Richter, Staff Officer, Region VI,

Area 15, "D" Div.

Our Map

With the map of the world on the wall before us, we type our letters, fill in forms, and send off the post. The General Office in Division "C" H.Q., Area 31, likes to be reminded of husbands, relations and friends scattered all over the world, and each one has a flag stuck on the map.

News will come through by post one morning, and a flag be moved from Cape Town to Abyssinia, or from a vague position on the sea to an English port.

Before we had the map, there used to be great arguments as to where a place was situated. Now we have only to search our map, and put our fingers on it in a few minutes.

This map gives us a breadth of vision. We realise how magnificently puny is this island, and how huge the Empire—and we are proud that we are British, doing a job to help protect England from being "blackened-out" on the map.

Frwmn. J. M. Bowes-Smith,

Region XII, Area 31, "C" Div. H.Q.

Region 12

Group Offr. Mrs. E. Hide, No. 31 Area Div'l. H.Q. Preston Circus, Brighton.

Asst. Group Offr. Miss Hibbert, N.F.S. College, Saltdean, nr. Brighton.

"Inwards Turn"

Fire Force No. 9 Area, Division "A," being keen "squad drillers" and rather proud of their marching, were nonplussed to receive strange commands issued on parade by a veteran of the last war (bedecked with ribbons and medals).

The Parade took place on a Sunday afternoon, and at 14.20 hours, whilst 1 leading firewoman and 5 firewomen were on the parade ground waiting for the others, numerous "dear old ladies," not to mention the young ones complete with handbags, umbrellas, walking sticks, etc., in one hand, and a number of small children in the other, arrived and "lined up" with Boy Scouts, Cubs, Brownies, Girl Guides, Home Guard, A.T.C., C.L.B. and Ex-Servicemen, all carrying a banner or flag at the head of each contingent, except the N.F.S. women.

At 14.45 hours all assembled, and we moved off headed by the village band in front and the Boy Scouts' band behind, both playing different tunes in different times, and the firewomen were vainly trying to keep in step with first one and then the other—result: glorified polka.

After a general route march round the village and up and down country lanes we arrived at a field (what a field!!!) and were quietly given the order "You Can Stop There." After another pause of indecision and puzzling as to whether we were to "Halt" (or be left in the field for the afternoon?), a loud voice gave the command "Inwards Turn." What to do? Mutterings and queries one to another—were we to face each other and prepare to dance the Lancers, or should we "Left Turn" to face the dais. Eventually it was unanimously agreed to Left Turn.

Here a roll on the drums called us (as we thought) to Attention for "The King" to be played. The A.G.O. was at the Salute with all the leading firewomen and firewomen, stiffly at "Shun"—but no—it was only the local dignitaries—so the A.G.O. quietly turned the Salute into a slight scratch of the head and put her hat straight whilst the leading firewomen and firewomen relaxed and recovered.

First-aid personnel were conspicuous by their absence and during the service, etc., a leading firewoman and the A.G.O. were kept busy with a jug of water and a tumbler (borrowed from a house nearby) running from one point to another reviving various members of the parade who had passed quietly out to the strains of "Faint not nor fear" (see the last verse of "Fight the Good Fight").

The "bodies" included Girl Guides, Boy Scouts, one firewoman and various members of the general public and the Standard Bearer, who sank gracefully to the ground with the Union Jack draped round him.

The moment of the firewomen came when their tall and strapping marker took the collection and marched up to the dais with a small A.T.C. boy on one side and a small Girl Guide on the other—imagine the combination—Long and Short!!

After the service the command "Inwards Turn" added more bewilderment to the firewomen as to which was "Inwards Turn" now. After being sorted and sifted the parade moved off and round the lanes and village. We again went past the saluting base, where the Lord Mayor took the salute (the Lord Mayor, by the way, forgot the words during the speech-making) and down to the Village Hall, where everyone was "Stopped," "Inwards Turned" and told to "Go Now" to get some tea. What a scrum!!! The poor firewomen made a dash for the tram and went thankfully back to their stations (most of the girls having done all this during their break), and when they were being revived with cups of tea, their feet thankfully resting on chairs, said:—"Inwards Turn"—Phew!!!

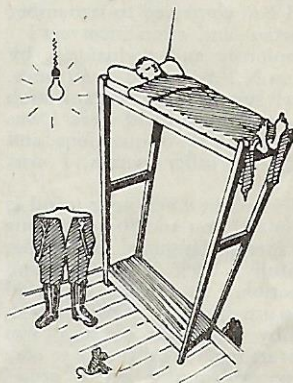
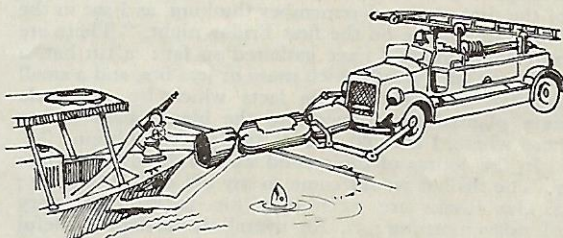
L/Fwmm. M. Coaton and Fwmm. M. M. Smith,
Region III, Area 9.

The Night after Christmas

Written and illustrated by

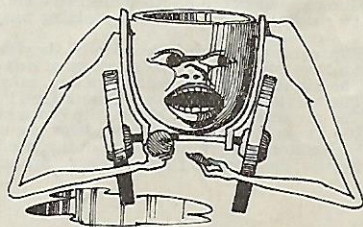
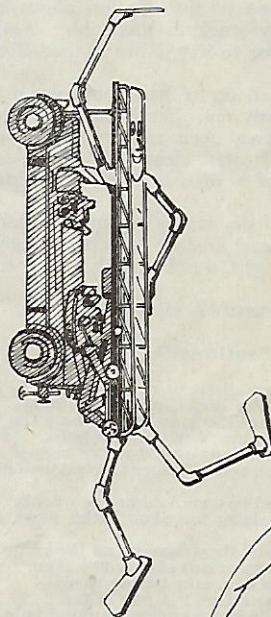
Fwmm. G. Williams, Region VI, Area 15,

"D" Div., Sub-Div. 1.



Christmas was over; the feasting had ended,
The turkey was eaten, the wine had been drunk,
And down at the station a fireman was sleeping
Who dreamed, as he tossed on his high canvas bunk
That the Fire Boat and Leyland were pulling a cracker,
While the Turntable Ladder was dancing a jig,
And the Mobile Dam Unit, its mouth opened widely,
Was biting an apple and nibbling a fig.

But a noise came disturbing the peace of the dreamer,
Bells clanging loudly; men shouting in ire,
So, slowly and sadly, with many a grumble,
He rose from his slumber—to tackle a fire.



A Trainee Looks Back

Do you remember, fellow sufferers, that first bewildering Monday morning three weeks ago? We were interested, and eager to learn, but we felt such fools because we weren't quite sure what was expected of us, and to me at least, everything seemed so very new and strange. Indeed, that was how I felt during the whole of the first week. I remember thinking, as I sat in the 'bus going home on the first Friday night, "There are only four things I have gathered so far: a tin hat, a gas mask, an overall which more or less fits, and a small quantity of miscellaneous facts which by a miracle have planted themselves into the blank space in my head where, I am told, one normally keeps a brain!"

In the course of the second week I discovered that:

1. The tin hat would come to my aid only in a Blitz;
2. Gas masks are worn only for 30 minutes every Monday morning;
3. An overall is extremely useful for doing "fatigues," but does not exactly enhance one's appearance;
4. The small quantity of miscellaneous facts which I had contrived to remember were mostly quite unimportant and often incorrect!

However, I was fed, copiously and exclusively, by my patient instructors, on an N.F.S. diet of occurrence, appliances, emergency water supplies, and organisation generally, and then, at the end of the third week I was presented with a pen, paper, and a set of questions, and left to fend for myself. In other words, I was "weaned"!

I experienced that awful moment when your mind is as blank as the paper in front of you and the questions might just as well be in a foreign language for all that they mean. Then mercifully, back into my mind trickled scraps of information. Frantically I sorted them out and called them to attention. "Now," I said, mentally eyeing the shabby line they made, "you fellows have got to work overtime. You've got to stay put, till the job's under control, and I get a 'stop' message through!"

They took a look at the questions, and winced; but they were British scraps of information about a British service, and so they stuck to their job. And they didn't let me down, for to-day I heard that I've passed my exams.

Sometime this week I shall go to Stores and get my uniform. Then I shall really feel that I can start my training. Up to now I have been training to be a "trainee"; next week I start learning to be a "frewoman," a member of a British Service serving British homes.

Then indeed will my little scraps of information develop into a regiment, and I shall be able to say "Squad, 'shun! By the right, quick march!" on to Victory!

M. Barnard (Trainee, Region V).

"Action Stations"

When the roar of Nazi bombers disturbs our quiet night, And sleep is stolen from us, like a bird that's taken flight, And the call of "Action Stations" echoes round the walls, And the noise of busy doings is heard within our halls, Our garments all lay near us and out of bed we've popped, And we're waiting in the watch room, before the 'phone has stopped.

One to each board allotted, and to each 'phone each book, And we're ready and we're waiting for what Hitler likes to cook!

There are messages in hundreds, they have us on the run, And we curse the whole progeny of our enemy the Hun, The night is passing quickly, a fire, now two or three— The tinkle now of china: Thank God! A cup of tea! The air gets cold and chilly, the dawn comes wan and pale, We know the raid is over, we hear the sirens' wail, We're tired, we're not complaining, we have a happy heart, For in this war for Britain, we've proudly played our part.

"18," Region VII.

Crossword Puzzle

CLUES ACROSS

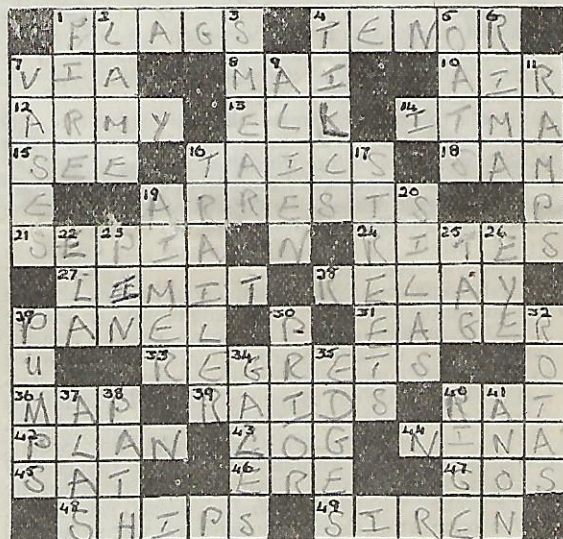
1. Put out on ceremonial occasions.
4. Richard Tauber is one.
7. By way of.
8. French for May.
10. Is this a current tune?
12. One of the Services.
13. A measure.
14. Radio character.
15. Perceive.
16. Some cats do not possess these.
18. The man with the musket.
19. Detains.
21. A colour.
24. Ceremonial observances.
27. There is an air of finality about this.
28. Not static, though connected with water.
29. Type of patient.
31. Keenly desirous.
33. Remorse.
36. Plan.
39. These keep us busy.
40. A rodent.
42. Necessary for successful organisation.
43. A bulky piece of wood.
44. Girl's name.
45. Rested.
46. Before.
47. Type of lettuce.

48. These "pass in the night."
49. This mermaid has a wailing note.

CLUES DOWN

1. The cause of smoke.
2. Meal (anagram).
3. Smudge.
4. Farming term.
5. Sometimes sown wild.
6. Epstein statue.
7. These often hold flowers.
9. Foreign.
11. Protection for hose.
16. Not self-propelled.
17. Highways.
19. One who aims.
20. Sails (anagram).
22. A mixed meadow.
23. There's a point to it.
25. Found on a shoelace.
26. Sometimes glass, sometimes black.
29. These are manned.
30. Superior of a monastery.
32. Duty systems.
34. Storms.
35. Rims.
37. Exclamation of dismay.
38. Track.
40. A cereal.
41. Soon.

Anon., Region VII, Area 18.
"A" Div. H.Q.



A Thought for Today

There is so much kindness in life that if we remember and dwell upon it, it will help us to grow sweeter and more lovable as the years go on.

It is such a pity to fall into the fault-finding habit. The complaining habit is so easy to acquire and so hard to be rid of.

There are speeches and "bad turns" that are very difficult to forget. They make deep, dark scars, and remembrance of them never entirely fades away. But the wisest thing to do is not to think about them. They were probably quite trivial words or actions, but we happened to be in an over-sensitive mood. It is the treasuring up of the remembrance of all such things that stifles kindly feelings.

To be even moderately happy in this life, one must try to remember only the kindnesses and thoughtfulness of friends.

The little prayers of Robert Louis Stevenson contain helpful advice for all: Purge out of every soul the lurking grudge; Give us strength to forbear and persevere; Offenders ourselves give us grace to forgive offences.

Forgetful, ungrateful, help us to bear with the forgetfulness and ingratitude of others.

Furnn. E. S. Roue, Region V, 37, "C" 1X.